

Title: History of Richard 7

Author: Beowulf Thormear

"I demand to know what this is about! I do not know you or your band of ruffians!" Richard barked out the words like a hardened soldier.

"You don't know who I am? Your own father? How sad. I suppose this ruins all my fun...or perhaps not. Eoric, bring out the boy."

Sounds of a struggle could be heard as the old soldier dragged a young child into the clearing, a loud thump echoed in the night air as the boy was thrown harshly to the ground. Richard immediately recognized the boy as his student from earlier in the day, a look of youthful defiance painted the boy's face as he struggled to rise.

"Eoric, give Richard and the boy a sword, it's time we played a game." The armored figure barked out the order, drawing his own weapon from its sheath.

"You have the chance to save your little friend, Richard. All you need to do is get by me before Eoric quarters the whelp, sounds fair, aye?" The figure's voice remained villainously humorous, as he began brandishing his blade in pleasure.

Richard immediately jumped to his feet, acting on instinct; he grabbed the blade that was placed beside him by Eoric. Rushing towards the armored figure, he could see the old man toying with the child, grinning rottenly as he parried the boy's attacks. Richard swung his blade low, hoping to catch the armored man off guard; however the soldier easily parried the blow, sending Richard reeling back in shock.

"Not fast enough, I taught you better than that!" The armored figure bellowed in enthusiasm.

Richard continued his assault, being turned back at every strike. Each second seemed like an eternity as he sought to pass the armored figure, trying desperately to come to the salvation of the child. Fighting back his anger, Richard watched in horror as the old man disarmed the boy with ease, pinning him to ground in preparation for a fatal strike. Richard suddenly felt a familiar sensation fall over him, as if a new world of knowledge was crashing through his thoughts. Reacting with newfound discipline, Richard gracefully struck at the armored figure, turning his strike into a seamless maneuver, disarming his opponent. Richard quickly turned towards the old man as his blade fell ominously towards the child's form. Wheeling back quickly from his last strike, Richard flung his blade towards Eoric, the

weapon slicing through the old man's ribcage, sending his bloodied form crashing to the ground.

"He is ready, do it now!"
The armored figure suddenly bellowed.

Richards's eyes quickly turned towards the treetops, as an arrow floated down silently from the heavens, sailing gently through the air into the downed child's body.
Richard screamed as the armored figure recovered his blade, approaching his now unarmed opponent.

"Look into my eyes!" the armored figure shouted.
Richard's vision inadvertently rose to his assailant's line of sight, locking eyes with the armored figure.

"Yes! Now you know, now you know!" The figure shouted with unbridled euphoria.

The memories of pain and suffering flooded back into Richard's memory, just as the crimson blade crashed through his chest, and impaled him to the forest floor.

Searing waves of molten rock rushed through his mind, burning memories, melting away the barriers that barred his secret consciousness. He writhed in agony as his body twitched and danced the death of the macabre, his mind crying out for relief from the endless barrage of physical and mental anguish. All at once his motions stopped, and in

his mind, a thought of self actualization gave birth to a second consciousness. Richard stood within his own mind, unaware of his physical form, standing in front of an incoming wave of molten rock and ash. His form was that of a child, an odd garment, seemingly divided in two draped his form, the first half was that of a peasant, ragged, but yet pure, the second, tough black material, stained with blood, pain spoke from this side, almost drawing the approaching flames towards it. Richard looked away from the enigmatic garment, and faced the burning wave.

"I see...so much... so much space, so peaceful, untouched by war or fear, entirely pure."

The words formed on his lips, and he knew he had spoken them before. Closing his eyes, he escaped into the recesses of his mind. Slowly the wave of searing flames slowed, its fires formed into beading pools of water, and the pains began to subside. Richard now stood over the same ocean he had as a child, Keil stood beside him, looking at him with a humorous glare.

"You didn't think I'd let you die did you?" Keil spoke in a hollow voice, echoing throughout the watery paradise.

"Keil... your dead...I thought..." Richard stammered childishly as he looked at his former companion.

"Of course I'm dead. I'm not even sure I'm really here right now, I could just be a figment of your imagination." Keil's eyes turned upward, as if pondering his own existence.

"Keil...I'm so sorry...I wouldn't have if I had known...if I had just..." Richard began to shake in anguish, the sorrow he had felt for his departed friend crippled his form.

"Don't talk, I forgive you. I realize what you meant now... about the ocean. I don't think it's pure because it's in its nature, but because you make it so. I've had much time to think, and regret... and I think I've got you figured out. I want you to do a favor for me, Rich... Step into the water, and let it wash away the pains of your past".

Richard nodded and slowly inched his way towards the endless expanse of water, feeling the cold waves caress his burned skin. The waters enveloped his form in a loving embrace, the words of his departed friend echoed in his ears and a feeling of serenity fell over him as his vision turned to black.

The forests of Yew sat peaceful, the suns rays danced in the sky like puppets under the control of an unseen puppet master, and the scent of pine flowed freely through the air. A small dove could be seen floating peacefully in the skies, its wings pushing it

hastily over the Yew trees, over orcish encampments and traveling merchants, and over a small clearing, barely visible through the thick weave of canopies. The dove gently descended, finally resting itself on a tree branch overlooking the form of a fallen soldier. The dove slowly moved its head towards the bright lit sun, and as its eyes took on a look of peaceful bliss, began to sing.

Richard's eyes fluttered open; his leafy dirt covered form slowly rose from the cold morning ground. His skin felt damp, and his shredded leather armor hung loosely to his now unscathed body. Richard looked towards the dove, a smile crossing his face. Reflected in the doves vision Richard saw a young boy, a peasants garb sewn together in the middle adorned his form, his pure and innocent face alight with life, and a pair of piercing light blue eyes glistening in the morning sun.